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in building boats to ferry their families and goods across. Their boats are constructed after a simple fashion. A quantity of bushes are cut and dragged down to the margin of the water. They take four tent-stakes, and lay them so as to enclose an area eight feet square, lashing them firmly together at the four corners. Four Indians then raise the stakes from the ground, while others place the skin covering of the tent over the frame, allowing it to sag down three or four feet. The edges of the skin are brought over the stakes, and fastened on the inside. The bushes, made ready for the purpose, are placed within, tops downward, round the entire circumference, and secured to the stakes, till the boat is completely timbered up. The bushes keep the skin distended, and give to the vessel an oval shape, so that, though square at the top, it bears a striking resemblance to a large iron pot. Its length and its breadth of beam are of course equal. When completed, it is firmly lashed from stem to sternpost, and from side to side, with a lariat, or green hide rope, forty feet long, to keep it from spreading or racking. I had no hand in modelling this witch of the wave, but, like an apprentice, did as I was ordered in forwarding the structure, and, when nothing else was required, "held on to the slack." It was at last completed, like the temple of Solomon, without the sound of axe or hammer; neither bolts, trenails nor caulking-iron, were required. We carried the barge down, and launched her in the stream. Two paddles were made by lashing two bladebones of the guanaco to sticks. Squaws, pappooses and baggage, were stowed away, till the boat was laden to the water's edge. I was directed to take passage with the family and household effects of the chief, and seated myself

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in the centre of the closely-packed craft. One end of a lariat was fastened to the boat, and the other tied to the tail of a horse. A savage mounted, with one rein attached to the wooden bit on the up-stream side. Two others took the oars, one on each side, and a squaw was stationed on the top-gallant forecastle for the purpose of singing, to insure good luck. All is ready. The old horse wades till the depth of water compels him to swim, and the boat is pushed off. The rider floats on the horse's back, kicking the water with his feet, holding the rein in one hand, and grasping the mane with the other. "Chew! chew!" he shouts, at the top of his voice. The black swan in the forecastle opens her capacious mouth and sings, "Yek yah, youri miti! yek yah youri miti!" The two oarsmen dig away with might and main, while the younger fry swell the chorus with a "Yah! yah! yah!" The boat brings some heavy lurches to the windward, then yaws off to leeward; all owing to those lubberly oarsmen not meeting her with the helm in season. At length, after innumerable shiftings we reached the opposite shore, and waded up on dry land.

Several boats were constructed after the same unique model, and succeeded in crossing safely. Some of the horses, being better adapted to towing, were swam back to repeat the process, and our craft returned for a second freight. I watched the proceedings from the bank with intense interest, speculating on the probable consequences of an accident to any of the fleet. Such was their superstition, that, in the event of any ill befalling them, they would be quite likely to ascribe it to me, and serve me worse than Jonah was treated by his shipmates. The swiftness of the current, and the rudeness of their navi-

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gation, made them so liable to mischief, that it seemed wise to prepare for it; and I at once began ingratiating myself with two of the worst fellows in the whole tribe, by professions of special good will and admiration for them, and confidential hints that they would share more liberally in the bounties of "Holland" than any of their fellows. Whilst thus engaged, with cautious glances across the river, to make sure that all was right, I perceived that there was quite a commotion among the people below; some were springing upon their horses, — others, ready mounted, were dashing furiously down the bank. On looking some distance below, a boat appeared to be in distress; the lariat that bound it together had snapped asunder, and the pressure within, and the strain of the horse without, had broken the front stake; the horse, relieved of his freight, pulled for the shore, and could neither be coaxed nor beaten into a return to duty. The horsemen on the banks dashed into the stream, and swam for the wreck, which contained, among other passengers, a young child. It was already filled with water, and was partially turned on her side. The surface of the river was dotted with dark forms, struggling with the mad current; one horseman after another each grasped a floating object, and made for the shore. The craft had drifted nearly half a mile, and nothing could be made out very distinctly. The squaws, on first perceiving the mischance, watched the wreck, and sung in a loud and plaintive strain, all the while casting unfriendly glances at me, and gradually approaching the place where I stood. My apprehensions were so far confirmed by this movement, that I told John (the name I gave one of my present particular friends),